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Letter dated 7 April 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on the arrest and bringing into custody of Charles Taylor, issued on 3 April 2006 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex). I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gerhard **Pfanzelter**
Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 7 April 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement on the arrest and bringing into custody of Charles Taylor, issued on 3 April 2006 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the arrest of former Liberian President Charles Taylor in Nigeria and his speedy transfer to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, where he is to stand trial on several counts of crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

The European Union hails the courage of Liberian President Johnson-Sirleaf in demanding Taylor's extradition and commends the important role played by President Obasanjo and the Nigerian authorities in securing his arrest.

The European Union is pleased to see Charles Taylor finally face justice. This marks a historic event for the people of Sierra Leone and brings hope for peace and reconciliation in the region. The arrest and transfer of Charles Taylor to the Special Court is also an important victory for international justice and the fight against impunity in the whole of West Africa. The European Union welcomes ongoing efforts by the Special Court to ensure that the trial of Charles Taylor will take place without external interference.

The European Union expresses its strong and continued support for the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The European Union reconfirms its strong support for peace, stability and democracy in the Mano River region.

The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Croatia,* the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and Turkey, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia and Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the stabilization and association process.